

# Activity Page for Kids

## Of Ranger Hats and Arrowhead Patches

So how do you know if you are in one of “America’s Best Ideas”?

Did you know you are in a national park? There are 391 units spread all over country. They are all very different, so how can you tell if something is part of the National Park System? Two things to look for are ranger hats and the arrowhead image. They tell us we are in a national park and about the history of the service.

Have you seen a park ranger hat? See the photo far right. There are lots of names for the ranger hat:

Smokey the Bear hat, flat hat and campaign hat. Which name do you like? Do you know why rangers wear a special hat? To find out we need to go back to the year 1916, the year the NPS was created. Before that different groups had protected the national parks including the US. Army. Those men wore hats called campaign hats. When the Park Service was created, park rangers adopted the army hat. Ask a ranger to show you their hat. Look closely, because there are things on the ranger hat that tells us what parks protect. Around the hat is a strip of brown leather called a hatband with designs on it – plant leaves and Giant Sequoia cones. It also has metal Giant Sequoia cones. Why so much Giant Sequoia stuff? Some of earliest national parks were created to protect the famous Giant Sequoia trees in California.

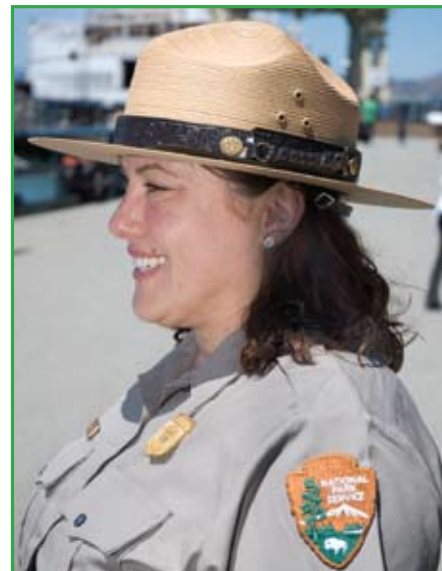
Also look for the arrowhead emblem on signs, pamphlets and park ranger uniforms. It tells us what the NPS protects and preserves. What do you see on the the arrow-

head? The buffalo? That represents the wildlife. The tree? The Giant Sequoia again. The mountains and water remind us of the scenic and recreational values of the NPS. The final piece is the patch shape itself. The arrowhead shape represents the historical and archeological resources of the National Parks.

So the patch represents all the pieces of the National Park System!

Sometimes it is hard to know

if you are in a national park, but if you see a ranger hat and the arrowhead emblem, you’ve found one!



**ACTIVITY:** Try creating a patch that tells the story of San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park, just like the arrowhead tells the story of the National Park Service.

What would you put in the patch? Or maybe you want to create a new patch for the National Park Service?

Use the space below to create your patch.

